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A life of dignity for all: accelerating progress towards the Millennium Development Goals and advancing the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 65/1, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report annually on progress in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals until 2015 and to make recommendations for further steps to advance the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015.

Renewed efforts are essential for achieving the Millennium Development Goals by the end of 2015. While providing an assessment of progress to date, the report also identifies policies and programmes that have driven success in the achievement of the Goals and can contribute to accelerating it. These include emphasizing inclusive growth, decent employment and social protection; allocating more resources for essential services and ensuring access for all; strengthening political will and improving the international policy environment; and harnessing the power of multi-stakeholder partnerships.

A new post-2015 era demands a new vision and a responsive framework. Sustainable development — enabled by the integration of economic growth, social justice and environmental stewardship — must become our global guiding principle and operational standard. This is a universal agenda that requires profound economic transformations and a new global partnership. It also requires that the international community, including the United Nations, embrace a more coherent and effective response to support the agenda. As we make the transition to this new era, we need to continue the work begun with the Millennium Development Goals and ensure that extreme poverty is ended within a generation. In keeping with United Nations principles, this post-2015 framework can bring together the full range of human aspirations and needs to ensure a life of dignity for all.

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I. Introduction

1. The world's quest for dignity, peace, prosperity, justice, sustainability and an end to poverty has reached an unprecedented moment of urgency.

2. In 2000, the States Members of the United Nations agreed on a bold vision for the future that reaffirmed the fundamental values of freedom, equality, solidarity, tolerance, respect for the planet and shared responsibility.

3. That vision, enshrined in the Millennium Declaration (General Assembly resolution 55/2) and rooted in the Charter of the United Nations, recognized the need to pool efforts as never before and to advance on three fronts simultaneously: development, peace and security, and human rights. Global challenges, local solutions; shared burden, shared gain: this remains the credo of international action for our collective well-being.

4. Among the promises made in the Millennium Declaration was a compelling pledge to spare no effort to free all women, men, girls and boys from the abject and dehumanizing conditions of poverty. The call itself was not new; the commitment to better standards of living is part of the purposes and principles of the United Nations. But what was new was the sense of possibility — the conviction that through a combination of targets, tangible investments, genuine action and political will, countries and people working together could end poverty in all its forms.

5. The Millennium Development Goals gave expression to this resolve. Since their adoption, Governments, partners and an inspiring constellation of groups and individuals around the world have mobilized to tackle the many dimensions of poverty. Those efforts have generated unprecedented advances in human development.

6. There has been substantial progress in achieving the Millennium Development Goals and several successes in reaching specific targets globally and in individual countries. However, the prospects for achieving all of the Goals differ sharply across and within countries and regions. More than a billion people still live in extreme poverty. Far too many people face serious deprivation in health and education, with progress hampered by significant inequality related to income, gender, ethnicity, disability, age and location. The prolonged global economic downturn and violent conflicts in recent years have exacerbated poverty, inequality and exclusion. Biodiversity loss, the degradation of water, drylands and forests and the intensifying risks of climate change threaten to reverse our achievements to date and undermine any future gains.

7. We must do everything we can to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by the end of 2015. That work is unfinished and must continue in order to secure the well-being, dignity and rights of those still on the margins today, as well as of future generations. By meeting our existing commitments, we will be in the best possible position from which to agree upon and implement a universal agenda for sustainable development after 2015.

8. At the same time, the world has changed radically since the turn of the millennium. New economic powers have emerged, new technologies are reshaping our societies and new patterns of human settlement and activity are heightening the pressures on our planet. Inequality is rising in rich and poor countries alike.

9. A new era demands a new vision and a responsive framework. Sustainable development, enabled by the integration of economic growth, social justice and environmental stewardship, must become our global guiding principle and operational standard. This framework can bring together the full range of human aspirations and needs. It offers a template for mutually reinforcing approaches to global challenges. Sustainable development is, in short, the pathway to the future.

10. So the challenge remains, even as it has taken on new complexity and increased in scale: we must fulfil our promises and meet the aspirations of the world's peoples, and we must summon the unity to realize the dream of the Charter and the Millennium Declaration. Ours is the first generation with the resources and know-how to end extreme poverty and put our planet on a sustainable course before it is too late.

11. The transition to sustainable development must not mean any diminishment whatsoever in the commitment to ending poverty. As underscored in the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 2012 (General Assembly resolution 66/288), poverty eradication is an indispensable requirement for sustainable development. This is a matter of basic justice and human rights. It is also a historic opportunity. If ours is the generation that can end poverty, there should be no deferring this essential mission, no shrinking away from the task. In a world of great wealth and technological advances, no person anywhere should be left behind. No person should go hungry, lack shelter or clean water and sanitation, face social and economic exclusion or live without access to basic health services and education. These are human rights, and form the foundations for a decent life.

12. Nor can progress be achieved or sustained amid armed conflict, violence, insecurity and injustice. These ills often have roots in social and economic deprivation and inequality. In the same vein, poverty can be a precursor and breeding ground of instability. We know that upholding human rights and freeing people from fear and want are inseparable; it is imperative that we do more to act on this basic truth.

13. The present report is intended to galvanize greater efforts to end poverty and achieve sustainable and inclusive growth. We will need enlightened and courageous leadership in the halls of government and the engagement of responsible businesses and civil society the world over. I have drawn considerable inspiration from a dynamic United Nations-led process — a global conversation launched in 2012 on the priorities of a new development agenda that would build on the Millennium Development Goals. In a series of global, regional and national consultations in nearly 100 countries and through a social media platform, more than a million people have shared their views on "the world they want". I am profoundly grateful to all who expressed their hopes and expectations and offered ideas and constructive criticism. The United Nations is strongly committed not just to listening to those voices, but also to amplifying and acting on what we have heard and learned.

14. In defining a new agenda, Member States can also benefit from the insights of a set of illuminating reports. My High-level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, co-chaired by Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, President of Indonesia, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, President of Liberia, and David Cameron, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, called for major transformative economic and institutional shifts: a new

global partnership and a data revolution for monitoring progress and strengthening accountability.

15. Reports by the Sustainable Development Solutions Network, the Global Compact Office, the United Nations System Task Team on the Post-2015 United Nations Development Agenda, the regional commissions and our partners in civil society and academia have also provided important inputs and recommendations for the formulation and content of the processes ahead.

16. The common ground in these contributions far outweighs any differences. Indeed, it is possible to see the emerging outlines of a new sustainable development agenda: universal in nature yet responsive to the complexities, needs and capacities of individual countries and regions; bold in ambition but simple in design; combining the economic, social and environmental dimensions while putting the highest priority on ending poverty and reducing inequality; protective of the planet, its biodiversity, water and land; rights-based, with particular emphasis on women, young people and marginalized groups; eager for new and innovative partnerships; and supported by pioneering approaches to data and rigorous accountability mechanisms. Guided by this far-reaching vision, a limited set of goals with sustainable development at the core, as called for at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, could be constructed to encapsulate current challenges and the priorities of the new agenda and to guide the transformation we need.

17. In the present report we take stock of where we are and where we need to go — first, in the time that remains until the end of 2015, and second, in the period beyond that. As a contribution to the discussions and negotiations of Member States, I offer my sense of the lessons we have derived from the Millennium Development Goals and set out a number of possible elements for consideration in charting a way forward. I look forward to a rich process of consultation and debate as the crucial year of 2015 draws near.

18. We are all aware of the vulnerabilities and perils that define daily life across the world. But there is also simultaneously a sense of wondrous potential made possible in part by science and technology but even more by our own hard work and devotion to common progress. Based on everything I have seen and heard during my six and a half years as Secretary-General, I am convinced that, collectively, we have the leadership, conviction and courage to address short-term uncertainties while seizing the opportunity for long-term change. In that spirit of hope and resolve, I offer the present report to the membership of the United Nations.

II. Achieving the Millennium Development Goals and accelerating progress

19. The Millennium Development Goals are our promise to the world's poorest and most vulnerable. They have succeeded in placing people at the centre of the development agenda.

20. We have made remarkable progress. Many countries — including some of the poorest — have aligned their policies and resources with the Goals to make unparalleled gains. Several critical targets have already been met or will be met by the end of 2015, both at the aggregate level and in individual countries. Sizable gains have occurred in even the poorest countries.

21. However, progress has been insufficient and highly uneven. Rural areas and marginalized groups continue to lag behind on virtually all goals and targets. Countries in or emerging from conflict, disaster or instability face significant challenges. In addition, the economic and financial crisis has complicated efforts, including by putting pressure on official development assistance.

22. Yet progress continues. In the *Millennium Development Goals Report 2013*, it is stressed that despite challenges and gaps, the agenda embodied by the Goals retains great power in engendering collective action for faster results.

A. Where do we stand on the Goals?

23. At the global level, poverty and hunger have been reduced significantly. In developing regions, the proportion of people living on less than $1.25 a day fell by more than half, from 47 per cent in 1990 to 22 per cent in 2010, with the majority living in rural areas. Much of this progress, however, has been made in a few large countries, primarily China and India. Moreover, even if the poverty target has been met, 1.2 billion people are still living in extreme poverty. For example, despite recent strong economic growth and declining poverty rates in sub-Saharan Africa, the number of people living in poverty is rising, and the region is still vulnerable to shocks that can rapidly erode gains.

24. The target of halving the percentage of people suffering from hunger by 2015 is within reach. The proportion of undernourished people in developing regions fell from 23.2 per cent in the period from 1990 to 1992 to 14.9 per cent in 2010-2012. However, one in eight people remain chronically undernourished, and one in four children suffers from stunted growth because of malnutrition.

25. We risk failing to keep our promise to enable all children to go to school. The number of children out of primary school declined from 102 million to 57 million between 2000 and 2011. But progress has slowed significantly over the past five years. Without renewed efforts, the target of universal primary education by 2015 seems beyond reach, particularly in conflict-affected countries. Half the world's out-of-school children live in sub-Saharan Africa, with the gap largest for children and adolescents from the poorest households. Much stronger efforts are needed to improve the quality of education and provide lifelong learning opportunities, especially for girls and women, those belonging to ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities and children living in conflict-affected areas, rural areas or urban slums.

26. Women and girls are major drivers of development. Yet challenges to achieving gender equality and women's rights remain significant. In many developing countries, girls are denied their right to primary education. Women have been gaining employment in non-agricultural sectors, but often in less secure jobs with fewer social benefits than those held by men. In both the public and private spheres, women continue to be denied opportunities to influence decisions that affect their lives. Gender-based violence contravenes women's and girls' rights, undermines development and is an affront to our common humanity.

27. Despite significant progress globally and in many countries, a renewed commitment is needed to improve the health and life prospects of mothers and children. The mortality rate for children under 5 dropped by 41 per cent between 1990 and 2011 — a significant achievement, yet far short of the target of a two-thirds reduction. The maternal mortality rate fell by 47 per cent over the past

two decades — again, important progress, but still far from the target of 75 per cent. Intensified efforts are needed to reach the most vulnerable women and children and ensure their sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, including full access to basic health services and sexual and reproductive education.

28. New HIV infections declined by 21 per cent globally over the past decade, and close to 10 million people living with HIV are receiving lifesaving antiretroviral treatment. Expanded treatment and prevention yielded a 25 per cent reduction in AIDS-related deaths between 2005 and 2011. Yet 2.5 million new infections still occur each year and in many parts of the globe, millions lack access to treatment. The last decade saw a 25 per cent fall in mortality rates from malaria globally, sparing the lives of an estimated 1.1 million people. Between 1995 and 2011, 51 million tuberculosis patients were treated successfully, saving 20 million lives.

29. Some of the targets for ensuring environmental sustainability have been achieved: the target for improved water sources was met ahead of schedule, and over the past decade over 200 million slum dwellers — double the target — benefited from improved water and sanitation facilities, durable housing or sufficient living space. Furthermore, from 1990 to 2011, 1.9 billion people gained access to a latrine, flush toilet or other improved sanitation facility. With rapid urbanization and population growth, however, the number of slum dwellers is on the rise. Two and a half billion people lack access to improved sanitation, while a billion practise open defecation, a continued source of illness.

30. In all countries, the achievement of Goal 7, on ensuring environmental sustainability, remains at significant risk because of the profound and urgent challenges posed by climate change. Carbon dioxide emissions are more than 46 per cent higher than in 1990. The atmospheric concentration of carbon dioxide has exceeded 400 parts per million, a level not seen in millions of years and threatening the existence of the planet.

31. Biodiversity loss continues at a rapid pace. Freshwater resources are being depleted and fish stocks are overexploited. Land degradation and desertification, ocean acidification and the loss of species and forests continue at an alarming rate.

32. As shown in the forthcoming MDG Gap Task Force Report 2013, progress towards a global partnership for development has fallen short of expectations. Following an encouraging rise in official development assistance since 2000, over the past two years aid flows have declined. Despite significant debt relief for many countries, the debt-servicing burden of some low-income countries remains intolerably high. Progress in improving market access for many developing countries has been slow, and "aid for trade" has not escaped the impact of reduced official development assistance. Despite welcome gains in connectivity, a substantial digital divide remains between developed and developing regions.

B. Which policies and programmes have best driven progress?

33. It is crucial to know what works and what does not. More than a decade of experience has painted a revealing picture. Strong national ownership and well-managed policies, supported coherently by partners at all levels, has underpinned progress in achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Policies that foster robust and inclusive economic growth, accompanied by measures to improve the access of poor and excluded people to quality basic services, have produced

gains in many countries. Much has been learned by formulating and implementing those policies. Applying these lessons will be important for making more rapid progress in the time that remains.

Emphasizing inclusive growth, decent employment and social protection

34. Inclusive economic growth with decent employment and decent wages has proven to be a prerequisite for achieving the Millennium Development Goals, particularly Goal 1, on eradicating extreme poverty and hunger. Progress in East Asia has been strong, and several countries in Latin America and Africa have successfully combined economic growth and redistributive policies.

35. Targeted investments in public health systems, fighting disease, education, infrastructure and agricultural productivity have all played important roles in achieving the Goals and promoting economic growth. These interventions work in a synergistic way and are therefore highly effective in integrated development programmes. Cash transfers targeting poor and marginalized families have also bolstered progress.

36. In East Asia, reforms in the agricultural sector have lifted hundreds of millions of people out of extreme poverty. Many Governments in the region have also adopted policies that increase social spending, expand social protection and raise the minimum wage.

37. Policies promoting rural employment have proved to have positive results in terms of poverty reduction, food consumption, household spending on education and health, debt reduction and asset creation.

38. In addition, programmes in Latin America and South-East Asia that have combined increased food production and distribution with skills training, microfinance, land distribution and nutrition education programmes have had positive impacts on child mortality and maternal health.

Allocating more resources for essential services and ensuring access for all

39. To accelerate progress on education, some countries have eliminated school fees and reduced the indirect costs of schooling. In Africa and the Middle East, policies have targeted orphans and other vulnerable children with vouchers for uniforms and books. In Asia, countries have scaled up stipend programmes and introduced financial support mechanisms for ethnic minority students.

40. In West Africa, complementing investments in infrastructure with female literacy campaigns to overcome resistance to girls' education in rural areas led to a significant increase in the rate of enrolment of girls in primary schools.

41. Some countries have expanded access to primary education while tackling gender disparities at the same time. Achieving the parity target by 2015 is within reach if entrenched gender disadvantages can be overcome, particularly in countries where early marriage remains pervasive.

42. Countries in Sub-Saharan Africa have launched nationwide midwifery schemes to train and deploy tens of thousands of front-line health workers to accelerate progress in preventing maternal and child mortality.

43. Improved national strategies supported by additional financial resources have contributed to faster progress on the Millennium Development Goals in the area of

health in many countries. The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, the GAVI Alliance and the United States President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief have played a major role, complementing national efforts.

44. Investments in human and physical infrastructure for the public health-care sector are paying off in South Asia, where services have been provided free of charge in facilities close to patients.

45. Policies supporting free universal access to quality primary health care for women and children have reduced child mortality in some countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, especially when special attention is given to reducing deaths from malaria, pneumonia, diarrhoea and measles and to rapidly scaling up the provision of insecticide-treated bednets, measles vaccine and vitamin A supplements.

46. National initiatives have proven to be effective in achieving water and sanitation targets. In South-East Asia, partnerships between local governments, builders and community leaders have been launched to meet the need for drinking water and sanitation. Access to latrines has increased significantly, driven by community empowerment activities, strengthened institutions and a community hygiene campaign.

Strengthening political will and improving the international policy environment

47. The global nature of many current challenges requires coordinated global action. I am very concerned by any developments or trends that threaten the global partnership for development, a core part of the Millennium Development Goal framework. There is an urgent need to stop and reverse the two-year contraction of official development assistance and aid for trade, especially for the least developed countries. Stakeholders should strengthen coordination and follow through on commitments to and for effective aid delivery, as well as cracking down on illicit capital flows, returning stolen assets and stemming tax avoidance and evasion.

48. I urge the members of the World Trade Organization to redouble their efforts to reach a development-oriented conclusion of the Doha Round of trade negotiations and improve duty-free, quota-free market access for products of least developed countries. Further efforts are needed to ensure timely debt relief for critically indebted developing countries, thus improving their chances of achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

49. A stronger partnership is also needed among governments, pharmaceutical companies, research facilities and philanthropic organizations to make essential medicines more affordable and available in public health facilities, including using the provisions available to developing countries in the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights.

50. Limiting and reversing the increase in the average global temperature to 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels in line with international agreements demands bold, coordinated national and international action. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change contains commitments and guidance, most notably the agreement of Governments to negotiate an ambitious, legally binding global agreement by 2015 that will cover all countries of the world in a fair way. The situation calls for full and urgent adherence to what was agreed.

51. Bolder measures are equally urgent on other environmental sustainability targets, including those related to biodiversity, water, land use and forests. Where commitments already exist, we need faster implementation of the corresponding multilateral environmental agreements.

52. With support from the international community, developing countries should accelerate efforts to improve the transfer of and access to information and communications technology, as well as to lower its cost, especially in key service-delivery areas. In order for technology transfers to countries embracing deep structural economic transformations to be successful, the institutional and human capacity gaps will need to be addressed at the local level.

53. The multi-stakeholder partnership model has emerged as a promising way to share burdens, catalyse action and bring all relevant actors to bear in addressing specific problems. We need to mobilize more action to deliver on commitments and exploit the full potential of the partnership approach.

C. Accelerating progress towards the Goals to 2015

54. Fulfilling our existing commitments and promises on the Millennium Development Goals must remain our foremost priority. Member States, with the continued support of development agencies, civil society and the private sector, should and can take bolder action to accelerate progress.

55. Together, we need to focus on those Goals that are most off-track and on countries that face particular development challenges, including the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing States and countries affected by or recovering from conflicts or disasters. In so doing, we must pay particular attention to the needs and rights of the most vulnerable and excluded, such as women, children, the elderly, indigenous people, refugees and displaced families, as well as people with disabilities and those living in poor rural areas and urban slums.

56. The preceding section highlighted some successful strategies for achieving the Millennium Development Goals. They show that accelerating progress requires national ownership and international commitment, with the right policies backed by reliable, timely financial resources and people-centred multi-stakeholder partnerships. Countries should make every effort to mobilize domestic resources. At the same time, these resources should be supplemented by external support where necessary.

57. In April I launched the campaign "MDG Momentum — 1,000 Days of Action" as a spur to achieve the gains we need by 2015. My appeal seeks to give additional impetus to several key initiatives that were already under way in response to the call for acceleration made at the 2010 high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals.

58. The Millennium Development Goals Acceleration Framework, a coordinated effort by the United Nations Development Group, is firmly rooted in national ownership and supports the systematic identification of bottlenecks and local solutions. Acceleration plans are being implemented in more than 46 countries across all regions, covering a range of goals and targets and bringing together a full spectrum of actors. Those efforts are assessed by the United Nations system in

collaboration with the World Bank under the umbrella of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination.

59. In one sub-Saharan African country, an acceleration plan on maternal health is being implemented through the revised national reproductive health policy and protocol. This is backed by a multi-pronged strategy that includes the use of mobile telephones for diagnosis and referrals and partnerships with local road transport associations to facilitate the travel of women in labour.

60. When implemented at the subnational level, the Acceleration Framework can also help to address disparity and inequality, as well as underlying causes such as discrimination and sociocultural exclusion. In one South American country, provinces and municipalities are implementing acceleration plans to address local priorities, such as poverty reduction and the economic empowerment of women, where progress lags behind the national level.

61. The €1 billion Millennium Development Goals initiative of the European Union has been supporting countries in the African, Caribbean and Pacific regions to accelerate progress on the Goals that are the most off-track: eradicating hunger, improving maternal health, curbing child mortality and improving access to water and sanitation. Nearly 50 have been supported to date.

62. Regional initiatives are an increasingly important part of the picture. In 2012, the African Union Commission adopted a road map on shared responsibility and global solidarity to accelerate progress in the response to HIV, tuberculosis and malaria. The actions in the road map are organized around three strategic pillars: diversified financing, access to medicines and enhanced health governance. Similarly, in 2012, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations adopted a road map for the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals focusing on five key areas: advocacy and linkages, knowledge, resources, expertise, and regional cooperation and public goods.

63. Every Woman Every Child, a multi-stakeholder partnership launched in 2010, seeks to save the lives of 16 million women and children by 2015. The United Nations secured commitments of $20 billion from more than 250 partners, including governments, multilateral organizations, the private sector and civil society. A new partnership between governments and United Nations agencies, "Committing to child survival: a promise renewed", was launched to reduce the under-5 mortality rate to fewer than 20 deaths per 1,000 live births in all countries by 2035.

64. The Sustainable Energy for All initiative, launched in 2011, aims to provide universal access to modern energy, double the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency and double the share of renewables in the global energy mix, all by 2030. Over $50 billion has been committed from all sectors to make this a reality, and more than 70 countries have signed up.

65. The Global Agriculture and Food Security Programme mobilizes resources to scale up agricultural assistance to low-income countries. The Zero Hunger Challenge, launched at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, calls for universal access to adequate food year-round, steps to prevent childhood stunting, a sustainable transformation of food systems, a doubling of productivity and incomes among smallholder farmers and drastic reductions in food losses and waste. Through the "Scaling Up Nutrition" movement, a partnership effort involving governments, civil society, the United Nations system, business and researchers,

more than 100 partners are supporting 40 countries in their efforts to reduce malnutrition and child stunting.

66. The Global Education First Initiative, launched in September 2012, aims to raise the political profile of education and seeks to ensure access, improve the quality of learning and foster global citizenship.

67. The Call to Action on Sanitation, initiated in March, has provided new momentum on an area that has received inadequate attention. The campaign for universal access to bednets by the end of 2010 made important inroads in tackling malaria. The One Million Community Health Workers campaign in Sub-Saharan Africa is expected to be critical in generating gains across the health-related Millennium Development Goals.

68. The replenishment of the Global Fund in the third quarter of 2013 will be of decisive significance for continued progress against AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. I call upon all donors, public and private, to do their part to support the Fund at this moment of utmost urgency as well as opportunity.

69. Multi-stakeholder arrangements have proven successful because they expand on traditional partnerships by significantly increasing available resources, improving the effectiveness of their use and increasing policy and operational coherence. To build on those advantages, I have put forward a proposal to Member States for a new United Nations Partnership Facility, which would aim to enhance the Organization's ability to facilitate delivery at scale at both the global and country levels.

D. Making the transition to a new sustainable development agenda that builds on the Goals

70. The adoption of the Millennium Development Goals represented a major shift in galvanizing global political will for poverty eradication. The Goals focused the world's attention on halving extreme poverty and promoting human development by setting priorities, goals and targets. Yet the Goals represent only the halfway mark towards the aim of tackling poverty in all its forms. United Nations projections for 2015 indicate that almost 1.3 billion people will still live in extreme poverty, mothers will continue to die needlessly in childbirth and children will suffer and die from hunger, malnutrition, preventable diseases and a lack of clean water and sanitation.

71. The job we started with the Millennium Development Goals therefore needs to be finished. Careful attention will be needed as we make the transition to an agenda that embraces the three dimensions of sustainable development yet ensures that poverty eradication is its highest priority and that extreme poverty is ended within a generation.

72. Since the Millennium Development Goals were devised, major new challenges have emerged, while existing ones have been exacerbated. Inequality has deepened. Environmental degradation has increased, threatening our common future. People across the world are demanding more responsive governments and better governance and rights at all levels. Migration challenges have grown, and young people in many countries face poor prospects for decent jobs or livelihoods. Conflicts and instability have halted or reversed progress in many countries,

affecting primarily women and children. Organized crime, including trafficking in people and drugs, violates human rights and undermines development. The deepening ways in which the lives of people and countries are linked demand a universal agenda addressing the world's most pressing challenges and seizing the opportunities of a new era.

III. Advancing the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015

A. Vision and transformative actions of the agenda

73. The articulation of a post-2015 development agenda provides an opportunity to place sustainable development where it should be: at the core of humankind's pursuit of shared progress. With a new sustainable development agenda, the world can make many historic achievements: eradicating extreme poverty by 2030, protecting the environment and promoting social inclusion and economic opportunities for all. Ultimately, the aspiration of the development agenda beyond 2015 is to create a just and prosperous world where all people realize their rights and live with dignity and hope.

74. As agreed at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, the framework for sustainable development reflects our commitment to three interconnected objectives: economic development, social inclusion and environmental sustainability. Each of these dimensions contributes to the others and all are necessary for the well-being of individuals and societies. Together, they are meant to enable people to fulfil their potential within the finite resources of our planet.

75. For such a sustainable development agenda to take root, four building blocks need to be agreed upon: (a) a far-reaching vision of the future firmly anchored in human rights and universally accepted values and principles, including those encapsulated in the Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Millennium Declaration; (b) a set of concise goals and targets aimed at realizing the priorities of the agenda; (c) a global partnership for development to mobilize means of implementation; and (d) a participatory monitoring framework for tracking progress and mutual accountability mechanisms for all stakeholders.

76. Decisions on the shape of the next agenda rest with Member States. To support their deliberations, I put in motion an inclusive and transparent process to hear from all stakeholders. Through the efforts of the United Nations Development Group and others, I sought the views of people around the world through consultations in nearly 100 countries, global thematic consultations on 11 issue areas and a global online conversation and "My World" survey. These efforts have reached more than a million people. A large number of civil society organizations and academic institutions worldwide have also actively participated in the discussions.

77. In addition, my High-level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda provided critical proposals (see A/67/890, annex). I have made the report available to all Member States and recommend it as an important contribution to this process.

78. I also benefited from the expertise of the science and technology community through the Sustainable Development Solutions Network. The contributions of the

private sector around the world were conveyed through the Global Compact. The United Nations System Task Team, comprising more than 60 agencies and international organizations, conveyed the knowledge and experience of the Organization, while regional perspectives were provided by the regional commissions.

79. Reflecting on many of these inputs, the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals is conducting a series of discussions aimed at formulating goals for sustainable development to be proposed to the General Assembly at its sixty-eighth session.

80. The common ground in the findings of these processes is encouraging. Discussions point to the importance of arriving at a single and coherent development agenda centred on sustainable development, applicable to all countries while taking into account regional, national and local circumstances and priorities.

81. The key elements of the emerging vision for the development agenda beyond 2015 include: (a) universality, to mobilize all developed and developing countries and leave no one behind; (b) sustainable development, to tackle the interlinked challenges facing the world, including a clear focus on ending extreme poverty in all its forms; (c) inclusive economic transformations ensuring decent jobs, backed by sustainable technologies, to shift to sustainable patterns of consumption and production; (d) peace and governance, as key outcomes and enablers of development; (e) a new global partnership, recognizing shared interests, different needs and mutual responsibilities, to ensure commitment to and means of implementing the new vision; and (f) being "fit for purpose", to ensure that the international community is equipped with the right institutions and tools for addressing the challenges of implementing the sustainable development agenda at the national level.

82. Bringing this vision to life will require a number of transformative and mutually reinforcing actions that apply to all countries.

83. **Eradicate poverty in all its forms**. Poverty has many manifestations and is aggravated by discrimination, insecurity, inequality and environmental and disaster risks. Therefore, the eradication of poverty calls for a multifaceted approach, encapsulated in the concept of sustainable development, focusing on both immediate and underlying causes.

84. **Tackle exclusion and inequality**. In order to leave no one behind and bring everyone forward, actions are needed to promote equality of opportunity. This implies inclusive economies in which men and women have access to decent employment, legal identification, financial services, infrastructure and social protection, as well as societies where all people can contribute and participate in national and local governance.

85. **Empower women and girls**. The new agenda must ensure the equal rights of women and girls, their full participation in the political, economic and public spheres and zero tolerance for violence against or exploitation of women and girls. The practice of child marriage must be ended everywhere. Women and girls must have equal access to financial services, infrastructure, the full range of health services, including in the area of sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, and water and sanitation; the right to own land and other assets; a safe environment in which to learn and apply their knowledge and skills; and an end to

discrimination so they can receive equal pay for equal work and have an equal voice in decision-making.

86. **Provide quality education and lifelong learning**. Young people should be able to receive high-quality education and learning, from early childhood development to post-primary schooling, including not only formal schooling but also life skills and vocational education and training.

87. **Improve health**. Address universal health-care coverage, access and affordability; end preventable maternal and child deaths; realize women's reproductive health and rights; increase immunization coverage; eradicate malaria and realize the vision of a future free of AIDS and tuberculosis; reduce the burden of non-communicable diseases, including mental illness, and road accidents; and promote healthy behaviours, including those related to water, sanitation and hygiene.

88. **Address climate change**. The international community must reconcile the challenges of mitigating and adapting to climate change while supporting the growth of developing countries. While the worst effects of climate change can still be averted by building the resilience of and investing in those communities and nations most vulnerable to disasters risk, those efforts will require a greatly stepped-up response, in keeping with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities. A successful outcome to the intergovernmental climate change negotiations is critical. Every effort must be made to arrive at a legally binding agreement by the end of 2015, as decided in Durban, South Africa, in 2011.

89. **Address environmental challenges**. Environmental change has compounded problems worldwide, especially in vulnerable countries, reducing their capacity to cope and limiting their options for addressing development challenges. Managing the natural resources base — fisheries, forests, freshwater resources, oceans, soil — is essential for sustainable development. So too is building the resilience of and investing in those communities and nations most vulnerable to disasters, especially in the least developed countries and small island developing States.

90. **Promote inclusive and sustainable growth and decent employment**. This can be achieved by economic diversification, financial inclusion, efficient infrastructure, productivity gains, trade, sustainable energy, relevant education and skills training. Labour market policies should focus in particular on young people, women and people with disabilities.

91. **End hunger and malnutrition**. Addressing hunger, malnutrition, stunting and food insecurity in a world experiencing rapid population growth will require a combination of stable and adequate incomes for all, improvements in agricultural productivity and sustainability, child and maternal care and strengthened social protection for vulnerable populations.

92. **Address demographic challenges**. While the population of developed countries is projected to remain unchanged at around 1.3 billion, the population of developing countries is projected to increase from 5.9 billion in 2013 to 8.2 billion in 2050. Countries with a high rate of population growth are generally on a path of falling fertility, especially as education for girls and sexual and reproductive health services become more widely available. Progress in these areas would enable many households to slow fertility rates, with consequent benefits for health, education, sustainability and the demographic dividend for economic growth. Countries with a

high proportion of young people need to offer education and opportunities for decent work. Countries with an ageing population need policy responses to support the elderly so as to remove barriers to their full participation in society while protecting their rights and dignity.

93. **Enhance the positive contribution of migrants**. More than a billion people rely on international and domestic migration to improve the income, health and education of their families, escape poverty and conflict and adapt to environmental and economic shocks. Countries receiving migrants can also benefit significantly. Yet many barriers limit the positive effects of migration, including possible large economic and social gains. Discrimination is widespread and the human rights of migrants are often denied at different points in the migration process. The scourge of human trafficking, an unacceptable dimension of migration, must be ended.

94. **Meet the challenges of urbanization**. Some 70 per cent of the world's population will live in cities by 2050. Urbanization poses the challenge of providing city dwellers with employment, food, income, housing, transportation, clean water and sanitation, social services and cultural amenities. At the same time, living in cities creates opportunities for the more efficient delivery and use of physical facilities and amenities. Rural prosperity, land management and secure ecosystem services should form an integral part of sustainable urbanization and economic transformation.

95. **Build peace and effective governance based on the rule of law and sound institutions**. Peace and stability, human rights and effective governance based on the rule of law and transparent institutions are outcomes and enablers of development. There can be no peace without development and no development without peace. Lasting peace and sustainable development cannot be fully realized without respect for human rights and the rule of law. Transparency and accountability are powerful tools for ensuring citizens' involvement in policymaking and their oversight of the use of public resources, including to prevent waste and corruption. Legal empowerment, access to justice and an independent judiciary and universal legal identification can also be critical for gaining access to public services.

96. **Foster a renewed global partnership**. The Millennium Development Goals, in particular Goal 8, on the global partnership for development, speak to the importance of our common humanity and the values of equity, solidarity and human rights. The post-2015 development agenda will need to be supported by a renewed global partnership grounded on such values. As noted in the report of my High-level Panel, "the partnership should capture, and will depend on, a spirit of mutual respect and mutual benefit".

97. The global partnership should finish the job started with Goal 8, including meeting the assistance objective of 0.7 per cent of gross national income, as well as other existing and future intergovernmental agreements, such as the Millennium Declaration, the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development, the Principles set out in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and the Istanbul Programme of Action, as well as the outcome of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action. All partners should deliver on past commitments, particularly those on official development assistance, climate finance and domestic resource mobilization.

98. The transformative actions of the post-2015 development agenda should be supported by multi-stakeholder partnerships that respond to the sustainable development agenda. These should include not only governments but also businesses, private philanthropic foundations, international organizations, civil society, volunteer groups, local authorities, parliaments, trade unions, research institutes and academia. Such partnerships can channel commitments and actions from a wider set of actors, and their success depends on assigning roles, responsibilities and clear accountability.

99. Official development assistance will remain crucial, including for leveraging other finance, particularly for the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States, many countries in Africa and countries emerging from conflict and disasters. In addition to delivering on past commitments, it will be critical for donors to establish a timetable for meeting official development assistance targets and enhancing development effectiveness, including through the principles and actions set out in the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation. The impact of official development assistance can be magnified by other sources of finance, including innovative sources.

100. A universal development agenda beyond 2015 will require a robust framework for sustainable development finance including both private and public funding. International efforts are needed to create an environment conducive to business and thus channel capital flows and portfolio investments to the sustainable development agenda, to eliminate illicit financial flows, to enhance the regulation of secrecy jurisdictions and to promote asset recovery. Multilateral development banks have an important role to play in identifying novel sources of sustainable development financing.

101. At the same time, the financing framework for the post-2015 period will require the mobilization of domestic resources, including by broadening the tax base and improving tax administration, including in developing countries, and improving corporate and public governance of extractive industries in resource-rich countries. In addition, the financing framework will require commitment by the public and private scientific and research communities to develop new and transformative technologies. Harnessing science, technology and innovative methods will be central in areas ranging from information and communications technology to transportation, the environment and life-saving medicines.

102. South-South and triangular cooperation will also play a key role. This has increased significantly in recent years and has taken various forms, including infrastructure investment, technical cooperation, joint research and investment and information-sharing.

103. I welcome the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing, which will propose options on a strategy to facilitate the mobilization of resources and their effective use. The biennial high-level Development Cooperation Forum and the follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development also provide important opportunities for charting a way forward.

104. **Strengthen the international development cooperation framework**. In order to respond to the challenges of funding and implementing a sustainable development agenda, both national and international institutions need to be strengthened to overcome the institutional and operational separation between economic, social and

environmental responsibilities. I particularly welcome, in that regard, General Assembly resolution 67/290, in which the mandate, organizational structure and the working methods of the high-level political forum on sustainable development were defined. There is broad agreement that the forum should bring political support at the highest level to the coordination, coherence, implementation and monitoring of the commitments in a universal sustainable development agenda.

B. Comprehensive monitoring framework and robust accountability mechanisms

105. Strong monitoring and accountability will be crucial for the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda. Governments, especially parliaments, will play a central role. The monitoring and accountability framework can be strengthened through the direct engagement of citizens and responsible businesses making use of new technologies to expand coverage, to disaggregate data and to reduce costs.

106. The availability of information has improved during the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals. Still, there is an urgent need to further improve data collection, dissemination and analysis. Better baseline data and statistics are needed, especially because the post-2015 development agenda will involve measuring a broader range of indicators, requiring new and disaggregated data to capture gaps within and between population groups. Assessing the quality of outcomes should also feature more prominently in a results-based framework. As suggested by my High-level Panel, targets will be considered to have been achieved only if they are met for all relevant income and social groups.

107. In this context, the advances in information technology over the past decade provide an opportunity for a "data revolution", which should enable countries to strengthen existing data sources and develop new and participatory sources of information. Many developing countries will require technical and financial support to build solid statistical systems and capacity so as to take advantage of these new opportunities.

C. Setting goals for the agenda

108. Experience with the Millennium Development Goals shows us that goals can be a powerful way of mobilizing common action. To be effective, they need to be limited in number, measurable, easy to communicate and adaptable to both global and local settings.

109. At the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, Member States agreed that the sustainable development goals "should be coherent with and integrated into the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015". The many consultations and reports suggest that a single, balanced and comprehensive set of goals, universal to all nations, which aims to eradicate all forms of poverty and integrate sustainable development in all its dimensions, should form the core of the agenda.

110. The framing of the set of goals for sustainable development will inevitably need to be broader than that of the Millennium Development Goals in order to reflect new challenges. Illustrative goals and targets have been proposed in a range

of reports, including those of the High-level Panel, the Sustainable Development Solutions Network and the Global Compact, and in several initiatives from the research community.

111. Goals and targets should take into account cross-cutting issues such as gender, disability, age and other factors leading to inequality, human rights, demographics, migration and partnerships. The new goals should embrace the emphasis on human well-being and include the use of metrics that go beyond standard income measures, such as surveys of subjective well-being and happiness, as introduced by many countries and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

D. Towards the formulation and launch of the agenda

112. The special event of the President of the General Assembly to be convened on 25 September will review current efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and provide a timely opportunity for rallying political support for their acceleration. The event will also serve as an occasion to reflect on the broad contours of the development agenda beyond 2015.

113. Member States should therefore use the special event to generate clarity and a solid momentum for the important discussions and decisions that will follow. In the outcome of the event they could issue a call for convening a United Nations summit in 2015 to adopt the new development agenda. To that end, the Assembly could request its President to hold consultations on a procedural resolution for initiating preparations for the summit, in which it could request the Secretary-General to prepare a report on modalities, format and organization for submission to the Assembly by March 2014. That report could serve as the basis for the Assembly's consultations on a comprehensive resolution on the timing, scope, format, participation and expected outcome of a summit in 2015.

114. The General Assembly could launch the final phase of the intergovernmental consultations on a post-2015 development agenda at its sixty-ninth session. Those consultations could draw on the outcomes of several intergovernmental events, including the high-level meeting on disability and development, to be held in September, the high-level dialogue on international migration and development, to be held in October, the third International Conference on Small Island Developing States, the climate change summit in 2014 as well as the next conference on financing for development. Our goal must be to make 2015 a defining moment for people and the planet and to show what the United Nations and Member States, working together, can achieve.

IV. Recommendations

115. **I call upon all Member States and the entire international community to take every step possible to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.** This will require political courage and enlightened leadership on the part of all countries, regardless of their level of development. But we must, as stated in the Millennium Declaration, spare no effort to deliver on our policy and financial commitments. This is our duty — our responsibility to humanity today and in the future. With political will and adequate resources, much can be accomplished before the 2015 deadline. Even then, some goals may not be met. Others, even if met, were designed

to address only part of the challenge. The post-2015 development agenda will therefore need to complete the Millennium Development Goals, scale up their success, expand their scope and address new challenges.

116. **I call upon Member States to adopt a universal post-2015 development agenda, with sustainable development at its core.** Poverty eradication, inclusive growth targeting inequality, protecting and managing the natural resource base of our planet within a rights-based framework and cognizant of the nexus between peace and development — these are the overarching objectives of sustainable development. To realize this agenda, all countries need to recognize the profound transformations required to address the emerging challenges of sustainable development. These include economic shifts to sustainable patterns of production and consumption, effective governance and a renewed global partnership and means of implementation.

117. **I call upon the international system, including the United Nations, to embrace a more coherent and effective response to support this agenda.** I welcome the leadership of Member States as they establish the high-level political forum, tasked with providing coordination and coherence at the highest political level to foster sustainable development in every country. The United Nations system will continue to reform and make itself "fit for purpose" so as to respond to the challenges of this new path to sustainable development.

118. **I encourage Member States to provide clarity on the road map to 2015.** As Member States consider the processes leading up to 2015, they could be supported by a report of the Secretary-General during the main part of the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly. This would draw upon the outcomes of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals, the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing and other bodies. The intergovernmental process could lead to an agreement on the vision, principles, goals and targets of the post-2015 development agenda, as well as on the renewed global partnership for development.

V. Conclusion

119. Acting upon our common challenges demands a renewed commitment to international cooperation. Multilateralism is being tested. The United Nations, as a global beacon of solidarity, must do its part to strengthen collaboration and show that it can be effective in building the just, prosperous and sustainable world that people want and have a right to expect. Defining the post-2015 development agenda is thus a daunting yet inspiring and historic task for the United Nations and its Member States.

120. In so doing we must continue to listen to and involve the peoples of the world. We have heard their calls for peace and justice, eradicating poverty, realizing rights, eliminating inequality, enhancing accountability and preserving our planet. The world's nations must unite behind a common programme to act on those aspirations. No one must be left behind. We must continue to build a future of justice and hope, a life of dignity for all.